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Question raised by gay in fraternity

How clear is discrimination rule?

By Jolayne Houtz
Of the Emerald

In January 1982 a member of Delta Sigma Phi fraternity at Michigan State University was disaffiliated.

Disaffiliation is not unusual, but the circumstances in this case were.

The fraternity voted to suspend that member, place him on alumni status and ask him to move out of the house, which he did. The member was gay.



Alan Contreras

In May of that year, he appealed the disaffiliation to the University's Anti-Discrimination Judicial Board, which recommended reinstating the student with full membership rights.

The problem escalated, and soon most of the campus was up in arms, as were national gay groups and the press.

The issue made its way through the University's judicial system, which largely supported reinstating the member.

Finally, in July, the matter reached Michigan State's president, Cecil Mackay, who ruled that fraternities and sororities were not subject to the school's anti-discrimination policy because they were not part of the university. He upheld the original decision to disaffiliate the student.

The former member decided

'This has been misidentified as a Greek issue. The issue should be, "How broad is the University's policy — what's covered and what's not?"'

— Alan Contreras

'It is just as we'd feel about an all-blond fraternity or an all blue-eyed fraternity — it shouldn't be monolithic.'

— Gerry Moseley

to give up his fight in September to protect his parents and to keep from wasting more time or money pursuing the issue.

There the matter ended.

Allen James, national executive director of Delta Sigma Phi, still supports the fraternity's action.

"It's not necessarily a matter of discrimination by the organization itself," James says. "As a private membership organization, it (the fraternity) has the opportunity to select and retain or discharge its members," he says.

The off-campus fraternity house was not university-owned, so its members had the right to retain only those students who they felt represented its standards, James says.

The issue of gay discrimination on college campuses extends beyond Michigan State University. Last spring it reached Eugene, and the University is still feeling its effects.

In May, a campus fraternity member approached law student Alan Contreras, complaining that his fraternity wanted to disaffiliate him because he was gay.

The student, who wants to remain anonymous, told Contreras how he thought the incident arose.

"The house president apparently discussed with some members of his house that he felt gay members... should be disaffiliated and that he would



Gerry Moseley

try to do it this fall," Contreras says.

At some point, however, the issue died, Contreras says. No one is sure why, but rumors abound.

The gay student felt his fraternity president simply changed his mind during the summer, but fraternity spokesmen say disaffiliation was never considered. The issue also may

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Politics symposium to begin next week

By Julie Shippen
Of the Emerald

The University will be transformed into political hotbed next week when a cast of more than 20 national and local politicians visit the campus as part of Politics 1984, a symposium sponsored by the ASUO.

In addition to spotlight appearances by U.S. Sen. Mark Hatfield, his Democratic opponent Margie Hendriksen and the candidates vying for major state offices, consumer advocate Ralph Nader and nuclear disarmament spokesperson Dr. Helen Caldicott will be delivering speeches.

Democratic candidate for president Walter Mondale had previously scheduled a special Oregon appearance at the University to coincide with the Oct. 15-18 symposium, but will postpone the visit due to a change in West Coast campaign plans, said Steven Rabinowitz of the Mondale staff. Rabinowitz said Mondale will be arriving on campus in the next few weeks, however.

The political symposium begins Monday under the theme of "State of the Earth" with Sen. Hatfield kicking off the week with a lecture at 9:15 a.m. in the EMU Forum.

At noon, Douglas County Commissioner Bruce Long, the Republican candidate for U.S. Congress, 4th Dist., will speak in the same room. Following Long in the Forum is a panel discussion on Ballot Measure 9, dealing with radioactive water disposal in Oregon.

At 8 p.m. Monday in the EMU Ballroom, Nader will give a keynote address entitled "Environmental Effects of Corporate America." Tickets are available at the EMU Main Desk for \$1 for students and \$2 for the general public.

The event continues Tuesday with a panel debate on the controversial Ballot Measure 2, concerning the state's property tax rate, at 11:30 a.m. in EMU Room 167. Immediately after the discussion at 12:30 p.m. in the EMU Forum is the Candidate's Fair, where incumbent Lane County Commissioner Jerry Rust and his challenger Tonie Nathen will appear together in a debate for the seat.

Legislative candidates Ron Eachus and Carl DiPaolo (House District 39) will be joined by District 40 incumbent Rep. Carl Hosticka and his opponent Mitch Hammerstad at 1:30 p.m. in the EMU Forum.

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Photo courtesy of University archives

'In nineteen-hundred-and-sixty-two...'

... On Columbus Day, the big wind blew.

The worst windstorm in West Coast history hit Eugene-Springfield in mid-afternoon on a fateful Friday 22 years ago, and much of the University campus, with its wealth of stately old Douglas firs, was left in a state similar to that found in the Fenton Hall quadrangle.

The late George Turnbull, former journalism school dean, viewed the ravaged campus the morning after and proclaimed it "one of the saddest sights I've ever seen." An estimated 75 campus trees were toppled by the 86 mph gusts.

The storm killed five and injured 45 in the Eugene area. One of the fatalities was a fifth-year University student, killed when debris from the Roosevelt Middle School roof struck him as he boarded up a window in his Amazon complex apartment.

October 1962 was one of the more eventful months in recent memory, but school desegregation in Mississippi, the Soviet military buildup in Cuba and the 15th-ranked Duck football squad took a back seat that afternoon to a dying South China Sea typhoon that had become a Northwest holocaust.